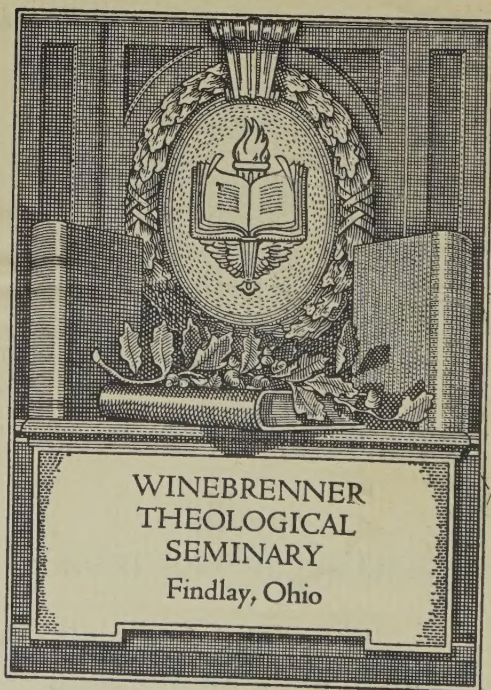




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ANNE HUTCHINSON

ANNE
HUTCHINSON

A BIOGRAPHY

BY
EDITH CURTIS

WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY
M. A. DEWOLFE HOWE

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[PURGATORIO XXII, 67]

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INTRODUCTION

IT was the fate of Anne Hutchinson, whose trial and banishment from Boston afford one of the least creditable episodes in local history, to be tried and banished by men. By men also this episode has hitherto been studied and described. Now, after nearly three centuries, a piece of posthumous good luck, long overdue, befalls this unhappy woman: at last a woman tells her story.

Nor is this quite all. Mrs. Hutchinson was driven from Boston to Rhode Island — known in her day as “the Iland of Errors.” From that region to Boston her new biographer has been transplanted. The whole panorama of American civilization is typified in the contrast between the Boston and Rhode Island known to Mrs. Hutchinson in the seventeenth century and the Rhode Island and Boston known to Mrs. Curtis in the twentieth. In the earlier period both regions, in their physical aspects of the life they harbored, were hard and crude — unbelievably. At that period the differences

were rather spiritual than physical. In Boston an "Opinionist," one who held opinions of his own, if they were at all at variance with the opinions of the intricately interwoven civil and theological authorities, might count with confidence on having a pretty miserable time of it. In Rhode Island an "Opinionist" was entirely at home. It was not for nothing that out of Massachusetts Roger Williams proceeded to the Providence of his founding and Anne Hutchinson to the Aquidneck of her four years' sojourn. These and other early settlers of the State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations established a tradition of tolerated divergency of opinion almost worthy of the nineteenth century come-outers of Boston who formed a "Club of the Like-Minded"—so called because no two of its members thought alike. Exile or the gallows would have been the fate of the minority in any such Boston club in the earliest days of the town.

It is eminently fitting, then, that a Rhode Islander by origin should now be re-telling the story of Anne Hutchinson. Too late in the day as it may be to expect any new documentary

light on the tragic story, it is none too soon to have it told with a feminine sympathy for the subject of it — sore beset as she was with ills both spiritual and physical. The reputed first club-woman of New England receives at the hands of Mrs. Curtis an interpretation at once comprehensive and comprehending.

For Bostonians yielding themselves to the promptings of tercentenary reflection the narrative will prove a valuable corrective — a sanative reminder of the pit whence they were digged. If they have been troubled in recent years by indications of a banishing tendency — applicable under modern conditions rather to ideas than to persons — they may comfort themselves at least with observing that the passage of nearly three hundred years has appreciably mitigated the terms in which the severities of community opinion are administered. And they may refresh their spirits by recalling that as long ago as 1841, when Hawthorne published his “Grandfather’s Chair,” he caused the boy of his narrative to remark of those who shared Anne Hutchinson’s heresies, that if they held the “eighty-two wrong opinions” ascribed to

them he could not "see how they could have any right ones." In two hundred years the sense of outrage at the whole Hutchinson affair had gained considerable ground. Since 1841 this sense has certainly grown stronger still.

There remains one fate from which Anne Hutchinson has had the felicity thus far to escape. It may be rash even to name it, so ready are the "creative biographers" to pounce upon new and alluring themes; she has not been followed, with a wealth of invented detail, through her meagrely recorded experiences in Rhode Island, where she lost the faithful husband who counted her "a dear saint and servant of God" to the end of his second-fiddle days, and her still more shadowy migration to Hell Gate on Manhattan Island where, with fifteen out of the sixteen accompanying members of her family, she was murdered by Indians. Another Hawthorne might do it, but the "new biographer" is adjured to take this mention of a terrific possibility not as an incitation but merely as a warning cry, *procul este profani!*

No, the story of Anne Hutchinson, in all the grimness of its authentic recoverable outlines,

here faithfully set forth, is vital and tragic enough in itself to provide the responsive reader with spurs to the imagination so sharp as to bring vividly before him the relative advantages of living in New England some three hundred years after its founding.

M. A. DEWOLFE HOWE.

ANNE HUTCHINSON



ANNE HUTCHINSON

I

IN all times and countries it has been dangerous to oppose the dogma of the day. When the mystic has the temerity to combine political and religious heresy, disaster is usually immediate and complete. Many a prophet who lacks the force and magnetism to gain a following, or who has the tact to refrain from publishing his or her private opinion of the priesthood, has pursued a heretical way to the grave, unheeded by his neighbors and unmolested by the state. Anne Hutchinson was both magnetic and aggressive. It was to be expected that a woman of her force and ability should gain immediate distinction in this New England community, Boston, where religion was the Alpha and Omega of every man's daily business. But that so harmless a nonconformist as Anne Hutchinson should have been tried and banished by the very men — or so we are taught to believe —

who had left the mother country in order to worship God according to the dictates of their conscience, was one of the ironies of history. In reality they left England for the same reason that they banished Anne Hutchinson. Not being able to banish the King or Archbishop Laud, they banished themselves. Now, since Anne could neither persuade nor banish them, nor they persuade her, she was banished.

Anne Hutchinson and her husband, William, landed in Boston in September, 1634. They came from Alford, near Boston in Lincolnshire. She was the daughter of one named Marbury, a preacher who was rather well known, first in those parts and afterwards in London. She was baptized in Alford, July 20, 1591; and her marriage is recorded in the Registers of the United Parishes of S. Mary Woolnoth and S. Mary Woolchurch Haw.¹ Little else is known of her early life. It is said that she was a cousin of John Dryden, but authority seems lacking.

Anne left England because John Cotton, the exiled preacher of St. Botolph's in Boston,

¹ St. Mary Woolnoth marriages 1612: Aug. 9. Wm. Hutchinson of Alford, Co. Lincoln Mercer, and Anne daughter of Francis Marbury, minister by license.

Lincolnshire, had decided to seek his fortune in the New World. To this, as to everything that Anne proposed, her husband, William, was amenable. The latter, as Governor Winthrop recorded with bitterness, was "a man of very mild temper and weak parts, and wholly guided by his wife."

At the time of the Hutchinsons' departure from England in 1634, they brought with them a son, Edward, who was destined to be the ancestor of Thomas Hutchinson, the author of the History of Massachusetts Bay, and the last Royal Governor of the colony. They came on the good ship *Griffin*. During the voyage Anne indulged in her favorite pastime of conversing upon religious subjects. The Reverend Zechariah Symmes related to the elders of the Church of Boston that Mistress Anne Hutchinson entertained divers heresies which she had divulged to him on shipboard. In consequence, although William Hutchinson was admitted to church membership October twenty-sixth, it was characteristic that his wife failed to satisfy the authorities until the second of November.

When Anne first viewed Boston from the

deck of the *Griffin*, she wept. The four-year-old settlement must indeed have presented a discouraging appearance. Boston was a wide, low-lying pasture with but few trees, a peninsula fringed with salt marshes and crowned by three conical hills. The houses, even the meeting-house, were made of clay with thatched roofs. These dwellings were scattered about, connected by a series of winding footpaths, many of which are the origin of our modern streets. After the tended verdure of an English countryside New England must have seemed singularly rugged and unkempt. Yet in spite of her depression upon landing, and the temporary coolness of the elders' welcome, it was not long before Anne Hutchinson became the most influential woman in the community.

After her admittance to church membership Anne might have been allowed to entertain such private opinions as she chose — if she had been content to keep them to herself.

She soon won a place in the hearts of the women of the colony by ministering to them during illness.

II

WELDE insists, with something more than his usual spitefulness, that she profited by her medical skill to instill heresies into the minds of the womenfolk at a time when they were particularly impressionable. But whatever reason she may have had for her kindness, it was not pecuniary. It sprang from a natural love of preaching and ministering. Indeed, her benevolence should be given full value. For, although Anne Hutchinson was at this time in the early thirties, and at the very height of her physical and mental powers, she was the mother of a large and almost annually growing family. As the ordinary necessities of life were not obtainable without hard work, the help which she gave to other women and the religious exercise she practised soon caused her to be regarded as a saintly person. Even if she preached a "Covenant of Grace" she was not above performing her own "Covenant of Works." Gradually she gained an influential following of both men and women that counted among its numbers no less a person than he who was soon to become

the "boy governor," Henry Vane the Younger.

When Anne began to preach according to her own inward light, and when she professed to feel that the spirit of God was upon her, it was extremely vexing to men whose guide was the Written Word and that alone. For it was a cardinal point of the ministers' faith that they were not inspired. Indeed, her behavior now began to be highly exasperating to the most powerful caste in the colony—the clergy.

At this time church and state were literally inseparable, but of the two the church prevailed, as is shown by the ruling that the right to vote depended on church membership. In the church the authority of the Holy Scriptures was paramount, but the ministers were the interpreters thereof. John Knox had substituted the authority of many ministers for that of one Pope. As civil persecution had been employed by the priests, it was now employed by the ministers to enforce religious conformity. For religious toleration found no home in the average seventeenth century mind. Men like Henry Vane the Younger and Roger Williams stand out like lamps of clarity lighting the cross-

roads that their contemporaries had not yet reached. Mankind had not yet sensed the difference between the liberty which does not trespass on the rights of others, and the abuse of that liberty which does.

The church of the Puritans consisted of the Deity, the Bible, and the clergy. The Bible was the constitution, the clergy the court that interpreted that word of God as previously revealed to His prophets.

That "God's unworthy prophets" were often narrow and bigoted is the general opinion today, but it is hard for us to realize how set apart they were, how they strove to make "a peculiar sanctification obtrusively manifest"; how they emphasized the differences that existed between other men and themselves by an exaggerated sobriety of dress, and piety of demeanor.

Also, the church was not merely a duty, it was the fashionable relaxation of the day — if one may use so worldly a word in relation to the Puritans. There was not only no morning newspaper, no theatre, no merely social gathering, but there were no comforts to speak of, and

no luxuries of any sort. There was literally nothing to do save love, work, and pray.¹ The almost insurmountable difficulties of transportation made even gossip monotonous. Naturally the sermons and sayings of the ministers assumed an exaggerated importance. When the governing body attempted to cut short the hours devoted to church discipline, the ministers jealously reprimanded the magistrates, and even compelled them to apologize. What matter if husbandry suffered? Was not the proper harvesting of souls — and incidentally the influence of the ministers — of more account?²

¹ Appendix I.

² Appendix II.

III

ANNE not only undertook to interpret the scriptures for herself, thereby overriding the ministry, but she even had the temerity to dislike the foremost pastor of them all, no less a person than the Reverend John Wilson, pastor of the Church of Boston. Her dislike was not entirely religious; he inspired in her a personal antipathy. At first the prejudice was entirely on her side. In a patronizing way he actually encouraged her meetings until it became clear that one of the prime motives of her gatherings was to criticize him. Moreover, her star was undeniably on the ascendant, whereas his own was on the wane. He would have been more than human had he not discovered matter for offense in her doctrines. To make matters worse, she had her favorite minister, John Cotton, the former rector of St. Botolph's, and the present teacher of the Boston Church. He preached, she said, "a Covenant of Grace" as opposed to "a Covenant of Works."

The origin of this doctrine — the nucleus of the Antinomian controversy — grew from the

story of the creation in Genesis. God gave the earth to Adam on the understanding that Adam would behave well — the Covenant of Works. If Adam had fulfilled the contract, he and all his seed would have inherited eternal life. Since Adam failed, the bargain was cancelled and a new covenant was made, that only the elect should be saved — the Covenant of Grace. This was the original doctrine. Under the Reformation it underwent a change, resulting from a rebellion against the penances, pilgrimages, absolutions, and so forth, of mediaeval Romanism that constituted justification by works. In the seventeenth century a person who was said to live under a Covenant of Grace possessed a strong personal sense of being at one with God, no matter what his conduct in everyday affairs might be. A person who was said to live under a Covenant of Works, was one who had no such sense of God's approval, but who hoped to win salvation by good deeds, and a well directed life. The one felt himself to be God's elect, and therefore certain of salvation. The other feared that although he might follow the path of virtue all the days of his life it might avail him

naught at judgment day. Naturally, a person who believed himself to be in a state of grace might become neglectful of his duty to his neighbor. The authorities in Massachusetts were quick to see the danger to the state in admitting that drunkards, felons, and ne'er-dowells of all sorts might be living in a state of grace, and to resent the imputation that their leading citizens who sought justification by works might be headed for hell. Although in all fairness to the Antinomians, as those who accepted Anne Hutchinson's heresy were called, they rarely used their state of grace to personal advantage. That is to say, they generally strove to lead upright lives, whether or no their sins might count against them in the next world.

In considering Anne Hutchinson it would be extremely interesting — and it is almost impossible — to determine how much she influenced the men who fell into difficulties for entertaining opinions similar to hers, such men as Henry Vane, John Cotton, and John Wheelwright, and how much they were led by her. As almost all the records of the so-called Anti-

nomian controversy are written by her denouncers, we can only measure her influence by the intensity of the bitterness she aroused. If we do, she must have been an exceedingly forceful woman — a very “Masterpiece of Woman’s Wit,” who “drew many Disciples after her, and to that end boldly insinuated herself into the favour of none of the meanest.”¹

What sympathy and friendship existed between Henry Vane and Anne Hutchinson? It is known that he came often to the weekly gatherings at her house which she held first, “to interpret” and later to criticize “the lecture” of the preceding Sunday. Possibly Vane was not so much interested in the precise opinions which Anne Hutchinson maintained, as he was devoted to the great cause of religious liberty, which he thought in danger. Vane entertained certain ideas of religious toleration that were far in advance of his time, ideas for which he was later to pay penance on the scaffold. Whether his support of Anne Hutchinson was due to natural sympathy, or merely an early indication of the enlightened belief which

¹ Edward Johnson: *Wonder-Working Providence of Sion’s Savior*.

afterwards colored his whole life, is uncertain. But his close affiliation with Anne Hutchinson, in the minds of his contemporaries, is illustrated by the history of the *Short Story*, a religious tract of the time, to us somewhat inappropriately titled. Governor Winthrop is supposed to have written it after the banishment of the Antinomians in 1638, and to have sent it to England. Thomas Welde re-edited and printed it in 1644, when Henry Vane, the most active supporter of the "new heresy," was fighting his great battle in parliament. Although some historians differ as to whether it was written by Welde or Winthrop, the great similarity between certain passages and Governor Winthrop's Journal make it seem that in part at least, the pamphlet was penned by the Governor. The *Short Story* is a fantastical account of the Antinomian Controversy, written by a pen dipped in the bitterness of polemic animosity. Its first printing and circulation at the time when Henry Vane, recognized leader and spokesman of the terror-inspiring Independents, was fighting his biggest fight for religious liberty, would seem to be an indication

of the extent to which he was affiliated with the teachings of Anne in the minds of his antagonistic contemporaries, since they strove to cut off his following by publishing the story of her banishment and downfall.

IV

ANNE HUTCHINSON has been described as “a woman of a haughty and fierce carriage, of a nimble wit and active spirit, and a very voluble tongue, more bold than a man, tho’ in understanding and judgment inferiour to many women.”¹ Whatever good looks she may have possessed — and they were not conspicuous, since beauty usually finds some self-appointed appraiser — she was endowed with personal magnetism. Tradition ascribes to this woman an oval, intellectual face, with deep-set eyes and prominent cheek bones, the general cast of countenance strongly tinged with ascetic mysticism. Picture dark hair and eyes, matched with an expression that is both serious and contemplative — a face too sombre for beauty, yet which kindled brilliantly under the fire of an idea. And we know that she impelled people to do and say things for her sake perhaps without their knowing why it was that they acted as they did. Of such quality is the stuff of leadership made.

¹ *A Short Story of the Rise, Reign and Ruine of the Antinomians.*

Soon her philanthropic activities took a definitely theological turn. The meetings which she held to rehearse and to criticize, for the benefit of any absentees, the sermon of the Sunday before, became immensely popular. Sometimes as many as two hundred persons came. At first there were only women present, but later men attended also. These gatherings were held in the Hutchinsons' newly built house in Washington and School Streets. The house stood nearly opposite that of Governor Winthrop, and was, for those days, a very commodious dwelling indeed, testifying to the social position of the Hutchinsons. How annoying it became to John Winthrop to watch from his windows the goings-in and comings-out over the way!

Crowds of quietly dressed, hooded women, and men in steeple hats, with close cropped hair, found their way into the long, bare room — for all rooms were unadorned in this early time. Anne Hutchinson usually presided; she sat behind a rough hewn table on which lay an open copy of the Bible. Vane, when he came — which was fairly often — sat at her right

hand. And as long as Vane's presence lent support to this, his most devoted disciple, John Cotton, no longer young and enthusiastic, but a grave man in the decline of life, was not slow to take the chair at her left. Many, especially the women, leaned on the word of Mistress Hutchinson as if it was the very bread of life for which their spirits yearned. Doubtless others came who dubbed her doctrine rank heresy. These she filled with a full and holy wrath to which they did not dare, as yet, to give vent.

V

As John Cotton wrote, "Mistress Hutchinson was well beloved, and all the faithful embraced her conference and blessed God for her fruitful discourses." And the authorities smiled upon her efforts. She was "countenanced and encouraged by Mr. Vane and Mr. Cotton."¹ These meetings must have been a veritable Godsend in the dour life of the Puritan housewife. Anne has been called the first American club-woman, a theological precursor of Julia Ward Howe. Although Vane's support brought her a certain free publicity and worked to her immediate advantage, his championship gave her activities a political edge the full consequences of which she perhaps did not realize, and which contributed in no small measure to the ultimate collapse of her faction. Yet at this time the friendship of Henry Vane must have seemed all that was most desirable to an ambitious woman — whether her aspirations were religious or political — since he occupied an enviable position in the hearts of the Bostonians.

¹ Hutchinson: *The History of the Colony of Massachusetts-Bay.*

VI

YOUNG VANE was about twenty-four years of age when he landed in Boston in October, 1635. "Here came also one Mr. Henry Vane, son and heir to Sir Henry Vane, comptroller of the King's house, who being a young gentleman of excellent parts, and had been employed by his father (when he was ambassador) in foreign affairs; yet, being called to the obedience of the gospel, forsook the honors and preferments of the court to enjoy the ordinances of Christ in their purity here. His father, being very averse to this way, (as no way savoring the power of religion) would hardly have consented to his coming hither, but that, acquainting the King with his son's disposition and desire, he commanded him to send him hither, and gave him license for three years' stay here."¹ As the son of a privy councillor, who was also one of the chief advisers of King Charles, he was warmly received by the colonists. Naturally, they were flattered by his

¹ John Winthrop: *A Journal of the Transactions and Occurrences in the Settlement of Massachusetts.*

preference for their society. Moreover, he represented Lords Brooke and Say, the Puritan patentees of Connecticut, and he had come to New England upon the express permission and order of the King. Although he was at times irritable and difficult, he was a man of high purpose and personal charm. The colonists hastened to bestow on him a warmth of adulation that might have turned the head of a much older man. Indeed, the citizens of Boston actually passed an agreement at a general meeting, that no one of them should sue another at law without consulting Mr. Vane and the two elders for arbitration first.

In November, Vane became a member of the Boston Church. In January, Vane and Hugh Peters, his companion on the voyage from England and a demagogue preacher of aggressive and bullying tactics, "finding some distraction in the Commonwealth, arising from some differences in judgment, and withal some alienation of affection among the magistrates and some other persons of quality, . . . they procured a meeting at Boston of the Governor [Haynes], the Deputy [Bellingham], Mr. Cot-

ton, Mr. Hooker, Mr. Wilson, and there was present Mr. Winthrop, Mr. Dudley and themselves.”¹ Although no one mentioned it in so many words, Mr. Dudley was jealous of Mr. Winthrop and he had not hesitated to attack the leniency of the latter’s administration. After an opening prayer, Vane officiously asked for “a more firm and friendly uniting of minds, especially of the said Mr. Dudley and Mr. Winthrop.” Although both Dudley and Winthrop professed utter ignorance of the existence of any ill-feeling between them, Mr. Haynes, then Governor, obligingly seconded Vane’s motion. The clergy were then called upon to express an opinion, which, after a night’s deliberation, they did — “that strict discipline, both in criminal offences and in martial affairs, were more needful in plantations, than in a settled state.” Winthrop generously acquiesced and promised a reform. The following May, young Vane was chosen Governor in Haynes’s place.

In spite of his calm temper and natural tolerance, is it likely that a man of Winthrop’s

¹ Winthrop’s *Journal*.

calibre would forget the meddlesome officiousness of young Vane? To do so seems, indeed, more than human. Vane was a supporter of Anne Hutchinson; and when Vane's administration and Anne's doctrines threatened, in Winthrop's eyes, to disrupt the colony, he found his old sense of irritation against Vane, like a stone at hand, to whet his enthusiasm for getting rid of them both.

VII

ALTHOUGH disdainful of all that ordinarily makes the prestige of her sex, Anne Hutchinson possessed singular intellectual seduction. Every kind of person fell under her spell, and beneath the sway of her opinions. Cotton and Wheelwright among the ministers; Vane, the Governor; among the magistrates, Dummer and Coddington; many of the visiting deputies from other towns, many of the yeomanry and soldiers; not to mention the women who felt a special sympathy for the teachings of Anne — became her disciples. Her words were heard everywhere. They were quoted at town meetings, at trainings, in public worship, in family prayers, in the blessing before meat, and the grace after meals. Even little children learned the patter from their parents and asked each other solemnly whether their parents stood for the Covenant of Grace or the Covenant of Works.

Anne, usually followed by her faithful friend and follower, Mary Dyer, rudely left the church whenever John Wilson spoke; and she

included in her denunciation all the ministers but Wheelwright, who had just arrived, and the teacher, Cotton. For, as Welde graphically says, "After our sermons were ended at our publicke Lectures, you might have seene halfe a dozen pistols discharged at the face of the Preacher (I meane) so many objections made by the opinionists in the open Assembly against our doctrine . . . to the marvellous weakening of holy truths delivered . . . in the hearts of all the weaker sort."

Soon the rift, already deep in the parish, was felt throughout the colony: Wilson, Winthrop, and the body of the clergy throughout the country on the one side; and on the other, Anne and the members of the Boston Church, with Governor Vane at their head. The teacher, John Cotton, was notoriously partial to her; how could he help it in view of her admiration for himself?

It is significant that the popularity of both Wilson and Winthrop was on the ebb. The future of these two men, who were accustomed to regard themselves as foremost in the colony, was threatened with eclipse by the revelations

of a seventeenth century transcendentalist, and the too enlightened opinions of a boy-governor from overseas.

In May, 1636, John Wheelwright landed in Boston and went straight to the house of his brother-in-law, William Hutchinson. After his coming, and partially on his account, Anne Hutchinson risked her popularity in a manner which cost her dear. If she did not actually start the movement to have John Wheelwright made teacher by Cotton's side, she was in profound sympathy with it. Naturally, Pastor Wilson objected; he would have differed with any proposal seconded by the annoying "Opinionists."

Anne now made her second mistake. Her first error had been made when she undertook to preach by direct revelation from God, instead of merely confining her remarks to an interpretation of the Sabbath lecture. Now, piqued by the opposition to her plan to have Wheelwright appointed as a teacher, she attacked Wilson; she intimated that the pastor of the Church of Boston was, after all, not an able minister of the New Testament. He was

not sealed with the spirit. He was under a covenant of works.

John Wilson, though doubtless in his way a worthy, well-intentioned man of the commonplace, conventional kind, had about him little that was either sympathetic or attractive. Harsh in feature and thick of utterance, he was coarse of fibre — hard, matter-of-fact, unimaginative. In his home and church life he is reputed to have been a not unkindly man, helpful to those who were dependent on him for help. On the other hand, in his pulpit he was more remarkable for his strength of faith and zeal for ordinances than for his talents as a preacher. He was by nature stern, unrelenting, bigoted; and no man in New England could be more cruel and exacting in enforcing conformity.¹

Such was Anne Hutchinson's influence among the people of Boston that the ageing pastor was deserted by all of his parish except John Winthrop. The latter's mistrust of Anne and her doctrines was bitter and intense, and the support she received from Henry Vane made him fear her as well.

¹ C. F. Adams: *The Antinomian Controversy*.

In reality the Boston Church was the only parish at war with itself, as Boston was the only settlement affected by the schism. In the colony at large all sided with Wilson. Cotton's position was somewhat equivocal. At last it was arranged that the ministers "should then [October 25th] come to Boston and hold a conference on these matters among themselves and with the members of the General Court."¹

The result of this gathering was "So as they all did hold that sanctification did help to evidence justification," but there was some difference as to "the indwelling of the person of the Holy Ghost." None of the clergy would go so far as "a union with the person of the Holy Ghost, . . . so as to amount to a personal union," although it was understood that Mrs. Hutchinson and Governor Vane held even this advanced tenet. But all agreed that if the last dogma was admitted that direct inspiration ensued — "the way was open for the appearance of the brood of God's prophets in New England."²

In short, the conference bore no fruit intel-

¹ C. F. Adams.

² *Ibid.*

ligible to the modern lay mind. But the proposal to make John Wheelwright a teacher occasioned one more dispute between Winthrop and Vane. Winthrop objected to Wheelwright's appointment on the ground that he was apt to raise dispute. As the rule of the Boston Church held that a weighty objection on the part of one member was sufficient to cancel a motion, Wheelwright's appointment fell through. Soon afterwards he "was granted unto for the preparing for a church gathering at Mount Woollystone upon a petition from some of them that were resident there."¹

Anne was not of a temper to be silent under defeat. The bitter feeling betrayed by the clergy against her at the recent conference merely goaded her to a more general denunciation. All of the ministers, with the exception of Wheelwright and Cotton, she now termed "a company of legall professors" who were "poring on the law which Christ hath abolished."²

¹The Records of the First Church, cited in C. F. Adams, *Antinomian Controversy*.

²*Wonder-Working Providence*, Poole's Ed., p. 102.

VIII

THROUGHOUT the autumn of 1636 Vane continued a long argument with Winthrop, in which he supported the metaphysical abstractions put forward by Anne. Winthrop's popularity gradually underwent a revival in the colony at large; for he alone was considered staunch to the orthodox faith. Vane, hitherto the umpire of discord — such as the jealousy between Dudley and Winthrop — was now held to be the champion of heretical opinions, even the actual sower of seeds of dissension. The criticism, evinced in many ways during his peregrinations through the countryside, became more than his high-strung nature could bear. Soon his nerves had the best of his judgment. Letters had arrived, he told his brother magistrates, necessitating his immediate return to England. Perhaps the recent unfavorable comment was especially hard for him to endure since "he had great respect shown him at the first. He took more state upon him than any governor had ever done before. . . . His administration for several months met with great ap-

plause." It may be that his was the defeat so often seen when an inflammable, sensitive nature meets with a slow, wise, patient man of less enlightened opinion — Winthrop. But, whatever the cause, it is somewhat startling to read that at the meeting of the General Court, Vane "burst into tears and professed that howsoever the causes propounded for his departure did concern the utter ruin of his outward estate, yet he would rather have hazarded all than gone from them at such a time, if something else had not pressed him more, viz., the inevitable danger of God's judgments which he feared were coming upon them for the difference and dissensions which he saw amongst them, and the scandalous imputation brought upon himself, as if he should be the cause of all, and therefore he thought it was best for him to give place for a time."¹ The outward dangers to which he referred were the French and Indians — imminent war.

When the General Court refused him the right to depart on any such dubious grounds, he recanted this his true opinion delivered un-

¹ Hutchinson's *History*.

der the stress of sincere emotion, and repeated that affairs in England demanded his immediate attention. As a large majority of the Court was anxious to see the last of him and to replace him with Winthrop, this excuse was accepted with an alacrity that was anything but complimentary.

IX

WHEN Anne and her friends found that they were on the point of losing the Governor, a meeting of the more prominent church members was held. They decided that the Governor should not be permitted to depart for the alleged reasons, and appointed a committee to wait upon the General Court and so inform them. This incident reveals the ascendancy that the church enjoyed. Incredible that the elders of any parish, however prominent, should have undertaken to dictate to the Great and General Court of Massachusetts!

Vane announced that as a good son of the church, despite the consent of the deputies, he could not depart without the elders' consent also. Probably the unforeseen briskness with which the deputies had called Vane's bluff compelled him to throw up his hands. In any case, it was decided, when the day for the new election came, to defer proceedings until the regular date in May, thereby retaining Vane for the remainder of his term as Governor.

In the meantime, Vane had a series of

quarrels with the ministers, which was dangerous, as no layman in those days might answer one of the cloth. The immediate cause was the desire of the ministers to separate Cotton from the Opinionists. For not only was Cotton the most distinguished clergyman in the colony, but his great name lent strength and respectability to the Opinionist faction. No other clergyman was so looked up to and beloved. He possessed a scholar's intellect, he was a fluent and gifted preacher, and a natural organizer of men. A natural dignity, that even the stoutness of his later years could not eclipse, endowed his medium height and florid complexion with an almost pontifical grace. "He was a man of ingenuous and pious candor, rejoicing (as opportunity served) to take notice of and testifie unto the gifts of God in his brethren, thereby drawing the hearts of them to him. . . ."¹ His intellect inclined to liberality, and brought him into close sympathy with Anne Hutchinson and Henry Vane. At this period of his life he had not yet learned that a lenient attitude toward the unorthodox was inconsis-

¹ Norton's *Funeral Sermon*.

ent with the founding and maintenance of a theocracy. He flirted with the Opinionists, and held frequent but discreet discourse with the magnetic woman who inspired them; yet he was not ready at this time, or later, to face martyrdom for the sake of religious toleration, or for the sake of his friends. John Cotton provoked bitterness, for he saw the light, considered the effect, and then deliberately helped to put it out.

The anxiety of the ministers to secure Cotton for their faction provoked Vane to further petulance. "The ministers had met a little before and had drawn into heads all the points wherein they suspected Mr. Cotton did differ from them, and had propounded them to him, and pressed him to a direct answer . . . to every one; which he had promised. . . . This meeting being spoke of in the court the day before, the governor took great offence at it, as being without his privity, etc., which this day Mr. Peter told him as plainly of (with all due reverence), and how it had saddened the ministers' spirits, that he should be jealous of their meetings, or seem to restrain their liberty, etc. The gover-

nor excused his speech as sudden and upon a mistake. Mr. Peter told him also, that before he came, within less than two years since, the churches were in peace. . . . Mr. Peter also besought him humbly to consider his youth and short experience in the things of God, and to beware the peremptory conclusions, which he perceived him to be very apt unto.”¹

John Cotton, himself, was next arraigned in a speech by Pastor Wilson. It was done with mixed melancholy and regret, much as a father might speak to a recalcitrant and erring son.

In December, 1636, Anne Hutchinson was summoned to a gathering of the ministers for an exchange of views. Wilson, Peters, and Welde were of those opposed to her, and of her friends there were present Cotton, Wheelwright, Leverett, and a few more. Peters acted as examiner for the clergy, and Wilson took notes. They asked her why it was that she said that all the clergy, with the exception of her two friends, preached a Covenant of Works? Her answer is not clear. Indeed, why should it be? What woman’s prejudice was ever logical?

¹ Winthrop.

Neither faction made any apparent headway as a result of the discussion, except to demonstrate that Anne's acclaim of John Cotton was beginning to make him squirm.

X

THE scene now shifts from the General Court to the little wooden meetinghouse that was known as the Boston Church. The body of the people was angry with Pastor Wilson because he had recently arraigned Vane and Mrs. Hutchinson before the General Court. Such an indictment of two church members necessarily included the whole parish, they said. The aged minister equivocated. Although Winthrop spoke in his defense, it was decided to admonish him before his own flock, and in his own meetinghouse.

Tuesday, February 10, was a day of great triumph for Anne Hutchinson and the Opinionists. Vane led the proceedings against the pastor in no uncertain terms. And his philippic was followed by a denunciation from each member of the congregation. In all probability, Anne was not laggard in performing so delightful a duty. How easy to picture her stepping from the midst of the drab flock to express, with the peculiar verbal seduction which always excited her contemporaries, her contempt

for the pastor who aroused her angry dislike.

Winthrop wrote, "It was strange to see how the common people were led, by example, to condemn him in that, which (it was very probable) divers of them did not understand, nor the rule which he was supposed to have broken; and that such as had known him so long, and what good he had done for that church, should fall upon him with such bitterness for justifying himself in a good cause." Cotton exhibited his talent for seeing both sides of the question; he did not actually denounce his pastor — in view of the lack of unanimity in the parish, he said, this was impossible — he contented himself with merely reproving him. That the teacher should thus reprove the pastor is evidence enough of the eminence of the former. And for once, our sympathies are drawn to the old, bigoted pastor who stood up before his parish and took public reproof with courage and dignity. Perhaps as he pondered this experience in his heart, he was not without hope that the tide of popular favor was on the turn, and that it might wash out the recollection of the indignities he had had to endure that day.

Certain it is that he was forced to possess his soul in patience; but when his hour came, he wreaked a brutal vengeance for each sneer that he had received at the hands of "the American Jezebel."

"Every occasion," says Winthrop, "increased the contention and caused great alienation of minds, and the members of Boston (frequenting the lectures of other ministers) did make much disturbance by public questions, and objections to their doctrines, which did any way disagree from their opinions; and it began to be as common here to distinguish between men, by being under a Covenant of Grace, or a Covenant of Works, as in other countries between Protestants and Papists."

XI

DURING February and March feeling ran high, for the ministers redoubled their efforts to redeem Cotton. Perhaps they were too much concerned. In the light of his subsequent behaviour, it seems as if he had always been cast for the role of Peter.

What of Anne at this time? Cotton asserts that she was neither in Vane's confidence nor in his. "And when she did come to me, it was seldome or never, (that I can tell of) that she tarried long. I rather think that she was loath to resort much to me, or to conferre long with me, lest she might seem to learne somewhat from me." It is true that he wrote this when seeking to prove that he had done right in deserting her, and that they never had been very closely affiliated;¹ yet his last remark intimates that Anne may have been suffering from the sin of pride. Perhaps she was puffed up by the infatuation of the people of Boston — for although she was detested throughout the colony at large, and dubbed the "She-Gamaliel" and

¹ Cotton's *Way Cleared*.

the "American Jezebel," and the like, in Boston she was greatly beloved. Perhaps her success as a religious interpreter led her to hold political ambitions also. Yet, although she may have been carried away by her political success during this period of Vane's support, fundamentally she was more a mystic than a person of political ambition. But, in view of her subsequent behaviour in Rhode Island, the question is left eternally open to conjecture.

Nevertheless, there were two definitely discernible elements in the Antinomian Controversy, the theological and the political. The theological struggle was between Anne Hutchinson and John Wilson, and it was about Cotton and Wheelwright. The political struggle was between Vane and Winthrop, and it was for the controlling influence in the colony. At times each element took on characteristics of the other. The theological controversy took on a political tinge, and the gubernatorial leaders indulged in metaphysics.

In estimating the two chief characters of the political struggle, Vane and Winthrop, it is tempting to admire the former at the expense

of the latter, because Vane's more "enlightened" opinions coincide with our own. Yet it should not be forgotten that whereas Winthrop was the actual founder of Boston, and had definitely severed his connection with England, Vane was merely an attractive young man who had been granted leave by the King to visit the New World for a period of three years. To Winthrop abstract theories were necessarily subservient to the immediate common weal.¹ Dissension and discord among themselves would merely serve to make them less able to fight the ever prevalent danger of famine and Indians. In all probability Anne was not concerned with the welfare of the colony at all, so much as with her liking of Wheelwright and Cotton, and her dislike of Wilson.

Anne Hutchinson's backing of Wheelwright tended to attract his brethren's ire. For he enjoyed no such eminence as Cotton; and even the latter's ingenuity was sorely stressed, as time went on, to save himself. But for the

¹ At the dismissal of the Rump Parliament Oliver Cromwell said to Sir Henry Vane: "Oh, Sir Henry Vane, thou with thy subtle casuistries and abstruse hair splittings, thou art other than a good one, I think! The Lord deliver me from thee, Sir Henry Vane!"

Carlyle, April 20, 1653, Vol. II, p. 205. Edition edited by Lomas.

present Cotton was too securely enthroned in the esteem of his fellow citizens to be in any danger. Anne herself was protected, at first, by her sex. But John Wheelwright was merely a newcomer of disturbing opinions. In a community that insisted on unanimity of belief as a basis for that coöperation without which its very existence was hazarded, he was a doomed man.

XII

ON the twenty-ninth of January, Wheelwright had preached his famous Fast Day Sermon in the Boston Church. He had come as a visiting clergyman to the afternoon service. At the time the sermon gave rise to no special comment; but at the meeting of the next General Court in March, which was attended by an advisory counsel of clergymen, matters came to a head. Although all but two ministers were opposed to Anne Hutchinson and her faction, the magistrates were not unevenly divided.

After a certain amount of preliminary skirmishing, Wheelwright was attacked for sedition propounded in this Fast Day Sermon. Since Wilson had been called to account for a speech made before the General Court by the people of his parish, the General Court, egged on by the advisory council of clergymen, now insisted on calling Wheelwright to account for his speech before the members of the Boston Church.

As soon as it became evident that Wheelwright was to be tried by the General Court, a paper, later known as the Boston Petition,

signed by sixty well regarded citizens, was presented. They besought the Court "that matters of conscience might be left for the church to deal with."¹ The Court ignored the request and proceeded to examine Wheelwright behind closed doors, by questions under oath. This method had harried some of these same persecutors out of England. The Anti-Clerical party protested vigorously that all subsequent proceedings should be public. They were only partially so. For a time Wheelwright refused to answer any further questions. He then appeared before the Court and a gathering of nearly all the clergy of the colony, to answer for his sermon. Wheelwright was found guilty of convicting all the ministers, "all who walked in such a way," of preaching a Covenant of Works. This was accomplished by the simple method of having each clergyman testify that he walked in the manner of a preacher of a Covenant of Works as described in his Fast Day Sermon by Mr. Wheelwright.

¹ C. F. Adams.

XIII

A LONG two-day struggle between Winthrop and Vane took place behind closed doors, before the Court declared Wheelwright guilty of contempt and sedition. But at last, to cite the words of Coddington, "the priests got two of the magistrates on their side," and so conquered. Immediately another petition of protest was presented by the Church of Boston, signed by more than sixty names. Although the victory had been won, the opposition was still strong. The clericals acted with caution. They deferred Wheelwright's sentence to the next meeting of the General Court. Should he be silenced in the interim? Such a course invoked bitter English memories. Welde, for one, had been silenced in England. The clergy, with surprising forbearance, advised the magistrates to hand Wheelwright's immediate future over to the Boston Church.

These recent sessions of the General Court had been held in Boston, according to custom. But as Boston was rife with angry Opinionists, the Conservatives were anxious to hold the

next meeting of the General Court elsewhere. Also, although the Conservatives held a small majority, as long as Vane remained Governor they were the opposition. Moreover, the Boston Church had constituted itself a censor. Accordingly, in spite of Vane's somewhat petulant refusal to entertain the idea, the question was put to a vote by Endicott, and carried — that the next General Court should meet at Cambridge, or Newtowne, as it was then called.

XIV

THE Court adjourned in March, and the charter election was to be held on the twenty-seventh of May. Each party to the theological dispute was trying to secure control of the government. And in the Church of Boston the dissensions could not be healed. Anne Hutchinson and Wilson were separated by a personal antipathy; Vane and Winthrop opposed one another as candidates for the Governor's office. In those days communication between Boston and Newtowne was so difficult that few of the men from Boston came to the election. Consequently, many of those present sided with Winthrop rather than Vane.

As soon as the Court was called to order, a petition — it was actually an appeal — from many of the inhabitants of Boston in behalf of Wheelwright, was presented. Immediately the assembly was in an uproar, during which the pastor, Wilson, in spite of the stoutness of his person and his advanced years, climbed an oak tree and harangued the mob, advising the freemen to look to the choosing of their magis-

trates — the immediate business of the day. This petition, Vane, the Governor, would have read, but Winthrop, the Deputy Governor, opposed as being out of order; this being the day by charter for elections, and the inhabitants all convened for that purpose, if other business was allowed to take up the time, the elections would be prevented; after the elections were over, the petition might be read. The Governor and his party would not proceed unless it was. Called upon by the Deputy Governor for a vote, the majority was for proceeding. Still Vane refused, until the Deputy Governor told him they would go on without him. This caused him to submit. Winthrop was chosen Governor and Dudley Deputy-Governor. There was great danger of a violent tumult, “but the manifest majority on the one side was a restraint upon the other.”¹

Picture with what misgiving Mistress Hutchinson must have received the news that her faction had not only lost the governorship to Winthrop, the staunch supporter of her favorite antipathy, but that Dudley had been made

¹ Hutchinson's *History*.

Deputy Governor! For this same Dudley "died with a copy of verses in his pocket wrote in his own hand." The following two lines made part of it:

"Let men of God in Court and churches watch
O'er such as do a toleration hatch."¹

But the freemen of Boston still remained loyal. Vane, Coddington, and Hough were chosen as candidates for the magistracy. At first the Court refused to admit them, but then, "not finding how they might reject them," it was allowed them to retain their seats.

¹ Notes to Governor Hutchinson's leaflet.

XV

"THE Massachusetts General Court of 1637," which was presently to try John Wheelwright and Anne, "consisted of eleven magistrates elected by the freemen of the colony at large, and thirty-two deputies chosen by the fourteen towns representing them. Magistrates and deputies sat and voted together; . . . Of this body, consisting all told of forty-three members, the opponents of Mistress Hutchinson had complete control; . . . for the opposition was limited to three Boston representatives."¹

At first the party in power behaved with great moderation. Wheelwright's case was taken in order; and then postponed until the next session — the Court contenting itself, for the time being, by delivering an admonition. John Wheelwright characteristically replied that he had nothing to retract. For he was both forceful and manly, not easily frightened or soothed.

Although not harsh at first, the Conservatives had no intention of allowing their power

¹ C. F. Adams.

to decline. Since the franchise depended on church membership, it was important not to admit any aliens who might prove recalcitrant. As Wheelwright and Anne were expecting a large group of supporters from England, the first act of the new government was to pass the Alien Law, which forbade any settlement to shelter newcomers for more than three weeks unless they obtained the consent of at least two magistrates. The magistrates were all Conservative; their refusal to harbor Opinionists was a foregone conclusion.

The men of Boston were not disposed to submit. The city that had never been backward in facing the hazards of savage warfare, refused now to supply her quota of men for the Pequot War, on the ground that the chaplain, Wilson, who had been drawn by lot to lead them on the expedition, preached a Covenant of Works. Even the sergeants who had always escorted Vane, expressed their disapproval of the general proceedings; they laid down their halberds and went home, remarking as they did so, that the sole reason they had accompanied Winthrop's predecessor had been the

affection which he had inspired in their hearts. Their behaviour occasioned much talk in the community, and mortification to Governor Winthrop. After a good deal of bickering, the latter was obliged to take two members from his own household; and so the matter was settled.

XVI

IN his continued discourtesy toward Winthrop, Vane showed himself both vain and petulant. His ill-humor was shared by Coddington, who later became one of the founders of the settlement at Aquidneck, near where Newport, Rhode Island, now stands. Together, they ostentatiously arose during public worship, and leaving the seats that had been set apart for them among the magistrates, joined the deacons. This was particularly rude of them, as the generous Winthrop had already sent a message, inviting them to share his own gubernatorial pew. On a fast day — appointed for prayer for the successful termination of the war against the Pequots — they departed for Mount Wollaston, and spent the day hearkening to the words of John Wheelwright. Vane actually declined to attend a dinner given by the Governor to Lord Ley, on the ground that "his conscience withheld him," and then at the very hour the dinner was to take place, "went over to Nottle's Island to dine with Mr. Maverick, and carried the Lord Ley with him."

In August, 1637, Henry Vane sailed for England, never to return. Vane had a more penetrating mind than Winthrop, possessed more variety and brilliance. But although Winthrop shared the general ignorance of his day — his credulity in regard to the supernatural is particularly startling — he was a far sounder leader for Massachusetts in 1637 than the enlightened agitator, Henry Vane. Palfrey goes so far as to say that these dissensions actually imperiled the success of the colony:

“Between the time when the vessel which brought Mistress Hutchinson to America, conveyed also the intelligence of the appointment of a commission for governing the colonies, and the time of her banishment, demands were twice made for the surrender of the charter. Within three weeks after Winthrop’s restoration to power, ‘came the copy of a commission from the commissioners for New England to divers of the magistrates here, to govern all the people of New England until further order, upon this pretence, that there was no lawful authority in force here either immediate, or immediate from his Majesty.’ ”

XVII

WHATEVER good the departure of Henry Vane may have worked in Massachusetts, the departure of their distinguished protector was to prove fatal to the cause of John Wheelwright and Anne Hutchinson. Furthermore, on the very day of Vane's sailing, the clerical party was strengthened by the return of John Wilson. He had been absent seven weeks with a little army that was fighting the Pequots. The Massachusetts warriors came home triumphant "and brought with them a part of the skin and lock hair of Sassachus and his brother."¹ Immediately the clergy girt their loins for another theological dispute. Late in August, a synod was held in Newtowne.

The synod was composed of about twenty-five ministers, who constituted the ecclesiastical staff of the community; and was attended, also, by many lay members, and the body of the magistrates. The proceedings were in public. The clergy were gathered together to act in New England as Bishop Laud was then act-

¹ Winthrop.

ing in the mother country. Their first act was to collect all the heresies they could find. "At the beginning of the Assembly, after much discourse against the unscriptural enthusiasms and revelations then by some contended for, Mr. Wilson proposed: 'you that are against these things, and that are for the spirit and the word together, hold up your hands!' And the multitude of hands then held up was a comfortable and encouraging introduction unto the other proceedings."¹ Eighty-two heresies were retrieved by these hounds of heaven. The entire pot was promptly bagged and destroyed by the Reverend John Wilson. "Let them go to the devil of hell," he said, "from whence they came!"

John Cotton promptly took steps to insure his future. "If he were not convinced, yet he was persuaded to an amicable compliance with the other ministers; . . . for, although it was thought he did still retain his own sense and enjoy his own apprehension in all or most of the things then controverted (as is manifest by some expressions of his . . . since that time

¹ Richard Mather.

published, . . .) ” “By that means did that reverend and worthy minister of the gospel recover his former splendour throughout . . . New England.”¹ Since no one could have understood the hazy dogmas under discussion, perhaps John Cotton is rather to be respected for his worldly wisdom than criticised for disloyalty to his faith. Wheelwright now stood alone.

The synod continued for twenty-four days. Just before adjournment, all matters before the clergy having been settled, Mrs. Hutchinson’s lectures were “agreed to be disorderly and without rule.”

Perhaps the General Court, to which Mr. Wheelwright’s case would now be referred, was too evenly divided in its opinion to suit the extreme clericals. In any case, it was suddenly dissolved, and a new election ordered, although the members had been elected for the entire year. As a result, twenty-one new men were returned out of thirty-three.

¹ Reverend Mr. Hubbard of Ipswich.

XVIII

THE courage of Anne Hutchinson and John Wheelwright remained unbowed. Even after the convening of the new General Court in Newtowne, early in November, Anne continued to interpret the weekly lecture to an eager and enthusiastic group of auditors in her own house. John Wheelwright ceased not to preach to his parishioners on the Mount; and neither made the slightest effort to mollify the authorities.

Mistress Hutchinson and the Reverend John Wheelwright, according to our ideas, should have been allowed to proceed on their way unmolested. But in the Massachusetts Bay Colony this was impossible. The New England of 1637 cherished religious conformity. As Governor Winthrop phrased it, the majority, "finding upon consultation that two so opposite parties could not contain in the same body without apparent hazard of ruin to the whole, agreed to send away some of the principal." Also, Anne had affiliated herself so closely with the defeated and departed Gover-

nor Vane, and she had succeeded in affiliating Wheelwright with that party also, that her political enmity to the new majority was taken for granted. In the day of "the exquisite rancor of theological hate," it was impossible to separate religion and politics. Winthrop had successfully rid the colony of Vane. He now proposed to rid himself of the leading Opinionists.

Extreme measures were the order of the day. After first purging the General Court of all the Opinionists save Coddington, John Wheelwright was brought to trial for sedition and contempt. "Being formally convicted," read the sentence, "and now justifying himself and his former practice, being to the disturbance of the civil peace, he is by the Court disfranchised and banished." He demanded an appeal to the King; and it was refused. "Having fourteen days to settle his affairs," the Court continued in the unperturbed and lofty manner peculiar to courts, "if within that time he depart not the patent, he promiseth to render himself to Mr. Stoughton, at his house, to be kept till he be disposed of; and Mr. Hough undertook to

satisfy to any charge that he, Mr. Stoughton, or the country should be at.”¹

Nor was banishment the mere lonely heart-ache, the nostalgia for hearth and country, that it has been in other times and lands. It was a penalty both harsh and dire. The exiles were compelled to rid themselves of house and property, usually at unprofitably short notice, and brave a forest teeming with treacherous red men. Usually the men went alone to prepare the way for their helpless families. But the day inevitably came when the women and children had to share the danger with them.² That such perils were not imaginary is shown by the cruel death at the hands of savages, subsequently suffered by the subject of this sketch.

In the allotted time, John Wheelwright was off northwards through the snow — which lay, that year, specially late on the ground — to New Hampshire. There he and a few others founded the town of Exeter.

¹ His sentence, as recorded by the General Court, November, 1637, cited in C. F. Adams.

² Appendix III.

XIX

MISTRESS ANNE HUTCHINSON was immediately arraigned before the General Court. She was "convented for traducing the ministers and their ministry in this country." They called her, and the expression implies the very great extent of her influence in Boston, "the breeder and nourisher of all these distempers." She had neither signed the remonstrance, nor preached sedition, nor as a woman could she take part in any possible uprising. But she had criticised the clergy; and of such criticism was she now accused. The meetinghouse in New-towne, where the trial was held, was "a rude frame building, built of rough-hewn boards, the crevices of which were sealed with mud. Its roof, sloping down from a long ridge pole, on which was perched a bell, had, it is supposed, at first been thatched, but was now covered with slate or boards; and the narrow dimensions of the primitive edifice may be inferred from the fact that when, a dozen years afterwards, it no longer sufficed for a prospering community, the new and commodious one

which succeeded it was but forty feet square.”¹ An inscription cut in the granite foundation wall of a modern spa, at the corner of Dunster and Mt. Auburn Streets, marks the spot where the meetinghouse stood. The building was used for all gatherings of the sort, such as the Synod, which had been held there the August before. The season, as is frequently the case in New England, was unusually severe. Although there may have been an open fireplace, there may have been no heat at all. “The furniture consisted only of rude wooden benches, on which the deputies and those in attendance sat, and a table and chair for the Governor and the magistrates.”²

The Court has been described in the preface of the *Short Story*, which was written by two of Mistress Hutchinson’s persecutors, as “An Assembly of all the Ministers and learned men in the whole Countrey, which held for three weeks together at Cambridge (then called New-Towne), Mr. Hooker and Mr. Bulkley being chosen Moderatours, or proloquutors, the Magistrates sitting present all that time,

¹ C. F. Adams.

² *Ibid.*

as hearers, and speakers also when they saw fit; a liberty was also given to any of the Countrey to come in and heare, (it being appointed in great part for the satisfaction of the people); and a place was appointed for all the Opinionists to come in, and take liberty of speech (onely due order observed) as much as any of ourselves had and as freely." One historian refers to the Assembly as "that ghastliest den of human iniquity, an ecclesiastical criminal court," ¹ while another asserts, "throughout, the so-called trial was, in fact, no trial at all, but a mockery of justice rather — a bare-faced inquisitorial proceeding." ²

Yet here are collected those Fathers of the Commonwealth who rank high in the veneration of posterity, engaged in a trial that excited more interest than any event heretofore in the history of the colony. John Winthrop occupied the chair of authority, and was at once both judge and prosecuting attorney. Chief among the magistrates were Dudley and Endicott.

What were the feelings of Anne Hutchinson

¹ Brooks Adams: *The Emancipation of Massachusetts*.

² C. F. Adams.

when she set out across the low marsh waste that lay between Boston and Newtowne, to face her accusers? Whether she travelled by saddle, boat, or farm wagon is not recorded; but she probably made the journey in a cart. For although it was early in the season, snow already covered the ground, and ice was forming in the Charles. It is not likely that she rode. She must have been both cold and tired after the bleak drive when she entered the chilly meetinghouse. Yet these ministers and magistrates compelled her to stand until her "countenance discovered some bodily infirmity," when a chair was procured. Brooks Adams wrote, "She was soon to become a mother." But how can this be when the miscarriage which occasioned so much talk on the part of Winthrop, Welde, and others, occurred in Aquiday in August of the following year? This was November. We must rather ascribe any infirmity that she may have shown, to dismay at the general condemnation of her friends, and anxiety for her own and her family's future. Nor had Anne Hutchinson any counsel to advise her when she stood in their midst, the

target of all eyes. Tradition relates that she stood proudly before her judges, with determination and courage. Since they cross-examined her in a way that was both brutal and unfair, she may be pardoned an occasional flash of carnal pride as she faced the gathering of learned men whom her doctrines had made afraid.

Governor Winthrop began with a general arraignment, accusing her of holding unseemly meetings at her house and of justifying Mr. Wheelwright's Fast Day Sermon and the Boston Petition. There was a moment when this Jezebel of nimble and ready wit seemed to be playing with the solemn Governor. For she asked, "Suppose I had set my hand to the petition; what then?" To which he replied, "You saw that case tried before." "But I had not my hand to the petition," Mistress Hutchinson concluded, with the comforting knowledge that the absence of signature to that document made her conviction difficult to obtain.¹

Governor Winthrop pointed out that the magistrates were the fathers of the Common-

¹ The report of her examination may be found in an appendix to Hutchinson's *History*; it is also in *Antinomianism*, edited by C. F. Adams, published by the Prince Society, Boston, 1894.

wealth, and that in criticising their conduct of affairs she was disobeying God's command to honor her father and her mother. To which Mistress Hutchinson steadfastly replied, "I do acknowledge no such thing; neither do I think that I ever put any dishonour upon you."

Secondly, she had to answer for the meetings held at her house. By what authority did she hold them? She answered that she did so by the scriptural rule in the second chapter of Titus, that the elder women should instruct the younger; and by the usage prevalent in Boston at the time of her coming. In the course of the altercation that ensued, Governor Winthrop said, "Your course is not to be suffered for, besides that we find such a course as this greatly prejudicial to the State." That is the motive of his conduct throughout — in order to save his colony from the perils of schism, and in an attempt to support the cause of law and order as he saw it, he shamelessly overrode religious toleration and civic liberty in New England.

"If you have a rule from God's Word, you may," Mistress Hutchinson replied.

“We are your judges, and not you ours. And we must compel you to it.”

These words of Winthrop’s must have wrought a familiar devastation in the hearts of the men who heard them, for many there had been silenced by the British prelates.

After this preliminary bout, the trial proceeded to the main issue. Anne Hutchinson was now accused of humiliating the public ministry. By singling John Cotton from the rest, and saying that he alone was “sealed with the seal of the spirit,” Anne had created a perpetual resentment and jealousy in the hearts of Wilson, Welde, Peters, and the rest. A female inclination became so odious to the ruling caste that it was treated as a danger to the state — which perhaps it actually was. For as the Deputy Governor, Dudley, said in a long speech, they had been a happy and peaceful people until recently, “and therefore being driven to the foundation and it being found that Mistress Hutchinson is she that hath depraved all the ministers and hath been the cause of what is fallen out, why we must take away the foundation and the building will fall.”

Six of the clergy now testified that they had had a formal meeting with Mistress Hutchinson in which she had disparaged the clergy. She insisted that the meeting had been informal, and that whatever she had said had been drawn from her in private discourse. A hot wrangle ensued, involving incomprehensible abstractions. But underneath the absurdity jutted the jagged rocks of wounded self-esteem. And so ended the first day of the trial.

Next morning Mistress Hutchinson demanded that the ministers testify under oath. This was looked upon as another insult to the clergy, and occasioned further dispute and bitterness. But after Governor Winthrop agreed to administer the oath — although he would concede no necessity for doing so — the ministers finally submitted.

Mr. Coggeshall, first witness for the defense, was brought in and immediately silenced by Mr. Peters.

“DEP. GOV.: Let her witnesses be called.

“GOVERNOR: Who be they?

“MISTRESS H.: Mr. Leveret and our teacher and Mr. Coggeshall.

“GOVERNOR: Mr. Coggeshall was not present.

“MR. C.: Yes; but I was, only I desired to be silent till I should be called.

“GOVERNOR: Will you, Mr. Coggeshall, say that she did not say so? (that is, all the ministers preached a Covenant of Works).

“MR. C.: Yes, I dare say that she did not say all that which they lay against her.

“MR. PETERS: How dare you look into the Court to say such a word?

“MR. C.: Mr. Peters takes on him to forbid me. I shall be silent.”

Mr. Leveret, the second witness, was called. He stated that Mistress Hutchinson, in reply to vehement entreaty on the part of Mr. Peters, to state the difference between his own teachings and those of Mr. Cotton, answered that he did not preach a covenant of grace so clearly as Mr. Cotton did, “because that as the apostles were for a time without the spirit so until they had received the witness of the spirit they could not preach a covenant of grace so clearly.”

Another altercation occurred between Mr.

Welde and Mistress Hutchinson, before Governor Winthrop called on Cotton to testify. Indeed, it was high time that the learned teacher of the Boston Church spoke in her defense, for she had begun to injure her cause by insisting upon senseless discriminations, and quibbling in childish and captious fashion. And her demand that the ministers be sworn was an affront to the elders of the gravest importance. Whatever faults these men may have had, perjury could scarcely be attributed to them.

When the ministers had begun to testify, Cotton had shown her his sympathy by seating himself at her side. He now arose in response to the Governor's summons. Although he must have been in sufficient danger throughout her trial to addle his wits, he alone evinced ingenuity and skill against the prosecution. And he did so by putting the evidence in a new light, rather than by contradiction.

Mistress Hutchinson appeared to Welde as "so fierce during her trial that instead of being like Daniel in the lion's den — she was rather like an antitype of the lions after they were let loose." But when, in answer to Dudley's chal-

lenge — “They affirm that Mrs. Hutchinson did say they were not able ministers of the New Testament,” came Cotton’s answer, “I do not remember it,” — she must have resumed her reasonable proportions even in the eyes of these fanatics. For they were in reality making an issue of political strife of what was nought but an Old Wives’ Tale.

Then it was, at the very moment when she had with Cotton’s brilliant assistance shattered the case for the government, that Anne Hutchinson delivered herself into the hands of her enemies, by professing that which all present believed her to be guilty of, but which they lacked sufficient proof of, to proceed against her. “And after many speeches to and fro, at last she was so full as she could not contain, but vented her revelations; amongst which this was one, that she had it revealed to her, that she should come into New England, and should here be persecuted, and that God would ruin us and our posterity, and the whole state, for the same.”¹ History has a curious way of repeating itself; and the trials of St. Joan

¹ Winthrop’s *Journal*.

and Mistress Hutchinson have something in common. For one of the most lovable characteristics of saints is their tendency to boast about their special intimacy with the Divinity — or His immediate representatives. Mistress Hutchinson had only to hold her tongue, but that was the one thing that she could not do — she simply could not resist the temptation to tell these elders, “the manner of God’s dealing with her, and how he revealed himself to her, and made her to know what she had to do.” Even when Governor Winthrop interrupted her, she was so “unwilling to be taken off” that “he permitted her to proceed” until she had completely confessed herself the recipient of “an immediate revelation,” . . . “by the voice of his own spirit to my soul.”

Anne could have said nothing that would so surely have destroyed her. For, although the Puritans accepted Special Providence and Portents, although they believed that God supervised their gatherings and proceedings, they drew a very definite and negative distinction at Miracles and Revelations. They repudiated both. Immediately a sweeping tide set against

her for "the most desperate enthusiasm in the world," as Governor Winthrop dubbed her revelations. Cotton, although denying his own belief in miracles and revelations, spoke as much as he could in her behalf. He suggested that in a less excited moment she would see matters in a different light. Dudley interrupted him rudely: "Sir, you weary me and do not satisfy me." Indeed the tide had set most definitely against her now; ministers and magistrates competed with one another in inveighing against her. Mr. Brown summed up the general feeling of the Court in no uncertain words: ". . . I think she deserves no less a censure than hath been already past, but rather something more; for this is the foundation of all mischief and of all those bastardly things which have been overthrowing by that great meeting (the Synod). They have all come out from this cursed fountain."

Without more ado the Governor asked for a conviction. But Coddington stood up and warned them, "I beseech you, do not speak so to force things along, for I do not for my own part see any equity in the Court in all your

proceedings. . . . I pray you consider what you do, for here is no law of God or man broken."

Although everyone was overwrought, and exhausted, witnesses were sworn before the hesitating deputies pronounced themselves as satisfied. The Governor then said, ". . . Therefore if it be the mind of the court that Mrs. Hutchinson . . . shall be banished out of our liberties and imprisoned till she be sent away, let them hold up their hands."

All but three consented, says the court record.

"Those that are contrary-minded, hold up yours."

Mr. Coddington and Colburn only.

"Mrs. Hutchinson, the sentence of the court you hear is that you are banished from out of our jurisdiction as being a woman not fit for our society, and are to be imprisoned till the court shall send you away."

MRS. HUTCHINSON: "I desire to know wherefore I am banished."

GOVERNOR: "Say no more, the court knows wherefore and is satisfied."

The Colony Records of Massachusetts

forthwith take up the tale: "Mrs. Hutchinson, wife of William Hutchinson, being convented for traducing the ministers, and their ministry in this country, she declared voluntarily her revelations for her ground, and that she should be delivered and the Court ruined, with their posterity; and thereupon was banished, and the meanwhile was committed to Mr. Joseph Weld untill the Court shall dispose of her."

XX

JOSEPH WELDE was a brother of Thomas Welde, her bitterest denouncer. In Joseph's house in Roxbury, Anne endured bitter suffering. Her husband, and all to whom she was accustomed to turn for protection, had gone into the wilderness to seek a home against the day of her banishment. Nor was she allowed to see any save a few intimate friends and her persecutors. She, whose utterances had been lately listened to as those of a prophetess, now found herself removed from the scene of her popularity, and imprisoned. There is reason to believe that her health and even her reason tottered during this terrible winter.

Although she must have been badly in need of a rest, she was allowed no solitude. The same men who had dubbed her "a woman not fit for our society," seemed to derive a peculiar satisfaction in visiting her, and listening to her heresies. "Divers of the elders resorted unto her" almost every day. Mr. Thomas Welde was particularly zealous in this regard. Satan, having once secured her for his own, would

scarcely lose the opportunity of making use of her! Even Cotton became one of her persecutors — he was buttressing the foundations of that eminent position which had settled so disconcertingly during his protégée's trial. Perhaps this change of front on the part of her teacher was the hardest test of all.

XXI

MEANWHILE the General Court, under Winthrop's guidance, was not satisfied until the remaining Opinionists were punished. Aspinwall, Coddington, Coggeshall, and nine more had already been bidden to depart. After sentence had been pronounced on Anne, "the Court called also Captain Underhill and some five or six more of the principal whose hands were to the said (Boston) petition; and because they stood to justify it, they were disfranchised, and such as had public places were put from them.

"The Court also ordered, that the rest who had subscribed the petition (and would not acknowledge their fault, and which near twenty of them did,) and some others, who had been chief stirrers in these contentions, etc., should be disarmed. This troubled some of them very much, especially because they were to bring them in themselves; but at last, when they saw no remedy, they obeyed."¹

This is a definite proof of how violent the

¹ Winthrop.

dissensions were. Even the sergeants who had refused to escort Winthrop the previous May were disfranchised and fined. The triumph of the Clerical Party was complete.

XXII

WITHOUT her knowledge the words that Anne Hutchinson spoke to the clergy who came to converse with her were being recorded against her. When the reverend gentlemen thought that they had secured sufficient evidence they "wrote to the church at Boston, offering to make proof of the same."¹ An ecclesiastical indictment was then drawn up by the ministers, consisting of about twenty-nine heresies professed by the "American Jezebel." This was then sent to the Church of Boston; and the Church, in turn, then applied to the magistrates for permission to try the heretic. Needless to say, the consent was readily obtained.

Anne was permitted, after three and a half months' confinement in Roxbury, to return to her own house in Boston. There was no one there to whom she might turn in this, her greatest hour of need. Both her husband, William, and her brother-in-law, John Wheelwright, had gone into the wilderness.

¹ Winthrop.

XXIII

“ONE Thursday Lecture Day after Sermon,” the twenty-fifth of March, Anne Hutchinson, the most distinguished sister of the Boston Parish, appeared before the congregation to answer to the ecclesiastical indictment drawn against her by the elders.¹ The Governor and Treasurer of the province, who were both members of the Boston Church, had obtained leave from the General Court, then in session at Newtowne, to attend the proceedings. Bitter it must have been for Anne to appear in such a way before the very men and women with whom she had been so popular but a few months previously. The trial in Newtowne had been conducted by her enemies and in a hostile community; but this — this was a denunciation made by those who had loved her. How desperately low her popularity had sunk during her confinement in Roxbury!

Mistress Hutchinson came in late, “pretending,” as Governor Winthrop remarks with somewhat unnecessary harshness, “bodily in-

¹ Appendix IV.

firmity." A copy of the twenty-nine new counts upon which she was summoned had been given to her several days previously, corresponding in a general way to the heresies enumerated during her trial in Newtowne. A copy of this indictment was now read by one of the elders.

Anne objected, fairly enough, to what she had said in private being brought against her in this fashion. Her objections were of no avail. The furious theological hairsplitting was begun.

But the endurance of Anne outlasted them all. Not without good reason had she come to her ordeal after the sermon. By dusk the elders had only disposed of four of the twenty-nine counts. They decided to admonish her, in the hope of making her see the light more readily. One son, and a son-in-law, Thomas Savage, objected, "Now my mother not being accused of any haynous fact, but only for opinion, and that wherein she desires Information and Light, (rather) than peremptorelye to hould, I cannot consent that the church should proceed yet to admonish her for this." One Thomas Oliver then moved "to lay these two Bretheren under

an Admonition with thear Mother," in order that "any act and every Act done by the Church may be as the act of one Man." John Wilson cried out, "I thinke yew speake very well! It is very meete!" Whereupon the church consented by silence to the admonishment which was pronounced by John Cotton.

"Then he (Cotton) showed her how, by falling into these gross and fundamental errors, she had lost the honor of her former service, and done more wrong to Christ and his church than formerly she had done good, and so laid her sin to her conscience." . . . "So she was dismissed, and appointed to appear again that day seven-night."¹

This admonishment, delivered by the man for whom she had always entertained such respect, esteem, and affection, was not without effect. She gave some signs of weakening. In consequence, she was allowed to return to Cotton's house in Boston, instead of returning as the Court had directed, to the house of Joseph Welde in Roxbury.

During the next week both John Cotton

¹ *A Short Story.*

and John Davenport, a divine who was also Cotton's guest, laboured hard for her soul. And they did not labour in vain. When she again appeared before the Court, "she did acknowledge that she had greatly erred, and that God had left her to herself herein, because she had so much undernatured his ordinances, both in slighting the magistrates at the Court, and also the elders of the Church." . . . "She confessed that when she was at the Court she looked only at such failings as she apprehended in the magistrates' proceedings without having regard to the place they were in; and that the speeches she then used about her revelations were rash and without ground; and she desired the prayers of the church for her."¹

"Thus far," says Governor Winthrop, "she went on well, and the assembly conceived hope of her repentance."

How could a proud, ambitious woman who disliked her tormentors with a personal hate, say more? She spoke the words of her recanta-

¹ *A Short Story*. (See also, a report of the Church proceedings in Mrs. Hutchinson's case found in 1888 among the papers of Pres. Stiles in the Yale library, and printed in *Proc. Mass. Hist. Soc.*, Series II, IV, 159-91.)

tion with bowed head, and in a low tone. Perhaps she knew if she had permitted her eyes to fall upon Wilson, Welde, or Peters, that the words would stick in her throat. But the elders did not want her recantation to be either acceptable or complete. Accordingly, they played the old game of provoking her to further speech, in the assurance that sooner or later her loquacity would betray her. They soon involved her in an unintelligible theological dispute — whether Mistress Hutchinson was not, or had not been in the past, “of that judgment that there is no inherent righteousness in the saints, but those gifts and graces which are ascribed to them that are only in Christ as the subject.”¹ What the elders really desired was to hear this woman, still dear to many present among the congregation, make a complete recantation, and humble herself utterly in their sight. But Anne Hutchinson could not bring herself to do in public, when badgered by men whose personal malevolence enveloped her like a cloud, what she had done in private for John Cotton, whom she loved and admired.

¹ *A Short Story.*

“My Judgment is not altered though my Expression alters,” she said.

Wilson opened a downpour of vituperation. Dudley, who was there neither as a magistrate nor an elder, but merely as a curious stranger, cried out, “. . . Her Repentance is in a paper, whether it was drawn up by herself, or whether she had any helpe in it I know not, and will not now Inquier to, but suer her Repentance is not in her Cowntenance, none cane see it thear I thinke.” Brother Wilson sounded a note of smug satisfaction when he said, “I cannot but reverence and adore the wise hand of God in this thinge, and canot but acknowledge that the Lord is just in leaving our Sister to pride and Lyinge, and out of hith Spirit to fal into Errors and divers unsound Judgments, and I looke at her as a dayngerous Instrument of the Divell raysed up by Sathan amongst us. . . .” She was not now accused of heresy but of falsehood. Even Cotton exclaimed, “God hath lett her fall into a manifest Lye, yea to make a Lye, and therefore as we receaved her in amongst us I thinke we are bownd upon this Grownd to remove her from us and not to retayne her any

longer, seeinge she doth prevaricate in her Words, as that her Judgment is one Thing and her Expression is another." But Cotton took pains to sidestep the odious duty of excommunicating his favorite disciple, saying, "The matter is now translated, the last day she was delt with in poynt of Doctrine, now she is delt with in poynt of practice, and soe it belongs to the Pastors Office to instruct and also to correct in Righteowsnes, whan a Lye is open and persisted in, in the face of the Congregation after proved by Witnes."

If the scene were not so tragic, it might remind the reader of the trial in the final scene, in *Alice in Wonderland*. The furious words of the elders smothered Anne Hutchinson much as the cards flew in the face of Alice. Until the tempest of bitterness and brutality wore itself out, she sat there without an opportunity to speak in her own defence and without a single friend to plead for her. John Cotton seemed now more than anxious to abandon her to the fate of banishment and so to know the last of her.

All were of one mind — or those that dif-

ferred did not dare to speak—that Anne Hutchinson should be cast out of the Church of Boston. With what unctuous gusto John Wilson must have pronounced the sentence of excommunication!

“Forasmuch as yow, Mrs. Hutchinson, have highly transgressed and offended, and forasmuch as yow have soe many ways trouble the Church with yow Errors and have drawen away many a poor soule, and have unheld yor’ Revelations: and forasmuch as yow have made a Lye, etc. Therefor in the name of our Lord Je: Ch: and in the name of the Church I doe not only pronownce yow worthy to be cast owt, but I doe cast yow owt and in the name of Ch. I doe deliver you up to Sathan, that yow may learne no more to blaspheme, to seduce and to lye, and I doe account yow from this time forth to be a Hethen and a Publican and soe to be held of all the Bretheren and Sisters, of this Congregation, and of others; therefor I command yow in the name of Ch: Je: and of this Church as a Leper to withdraw yor self owt of the Congregation; that as formerly yow have dispised and contemned the Holy Ordinances

of God, and turned yor Backe one them, soe yow may now have no part in them nor benefit by them."

As she went forth from the Church followed by her faithful friend, Mary Dyer, one who was standing at the doorway said to her, "The Lord sanctify this unto you."

Anne Hutchinson replied, "The Lord judgeth not as man judgeth. Better to be cast out of the Church than to deny Christ." ¹

¹ *A Short Story.*

XXIV

ANNE's friend and disciple, Mary Dyer, was the Quakeress who suffered martyrdom in Boston, 1660. When she and Anne each experienced the gravest misfortune of maternity, it was said that the fruit of their bodies corresponded to the monstrous fruit of their souls — the heresies that they entertained.

For the air of "the Bay" was redolent of superstition. These men and women claimed a personal supervision both from God and the devil, that was, to our way of thinking, highly flattering to the individual's self-importance. A man's sins were visited upon him by a vengeful God; and the counsel of omens and portents was solemnly consulted. Each detail of a person's private life was dissected for the public, particularly if that person was suspected of heresy. The misfortune of these two women, due no doubt to the continuance of nervous strain to which they had been subjected, became a matter of personal investigation for the Governor of the Commonwealth! Mary Dyer was henceforth known as "the woman which

had the monster"; and Anne Hutchinson, whose miscarriage probably took place the following August after her removal to the "Isle of Aquiday" was made the subject of a lecture in an open assembly at Boston! The circumstance was not only "diversely related in the country," but Mr. Cotton also made it the theme of his address. Did it not signify her error in denying inherent righteousness?¹

¹ Appendix V.

XXV

THE conditions in Boston under Governor Winthrop's leadership occasioned the departure of many Opinionists. The city was now under a system of terrorism. Men and women lived in daily fear of being sent into the wilderness. Indeed, Winthrop's power and triumph at this time make it difficult to believe that he himself had been in serious danger of being called to account during the trial of Anne Hutchinson by the General Court at Newtowne, only a few months before. Perhaps his recent fears stimulated his severity.

Henceforth Winthrop pursued the narrow path which the late disturbances had taught him to believe was the only road that led to the safety of the colony. Cotton concentrated his mighty efforts on the establishment of that theocracy which was destined to benumb the intellectual life of Massachusetts for many generations. Happily, the struggle for civic liberty went on unchecked. Almost the sole contribution that Massachusetts made to American civilization was in this field — for a long period.

The suppression of free speech and freedom of conscience, did introduce a more peaceful era; but it was the calm of stagnation, and it permitted the theocracy to nurture an atmosphere of almost barbaric superstition for which the children of a subsequent generation were destined to be heartily ashamed — Salem 1692.

XXVI

Two or three days after the delivery of the sentence of excommunication, Anne Hutchinson left Boston for Mount Wollaston, where her husband, like many other city people, had a farm. She intended to accompany the family of John Wheelwright to Exeter, but as William Hutchinson, Coddington, Coggeshall, and a few others had concluded a purchase at Aquidneck, Rhode Island, she went to Providence to join them instead.

Now that fate had bestowed on her a second chance, it was only natural that Anne should have yearned for the presence of the man who had made her initial success.

In a letter to Governor Winthrop, from Providence, April 16, 1638, Roger Williams says: "I find their longings great after Mr. Vane, although they think that he cannot return this year; the eyes of some many are so earnestly fixed upon him that Mrs. Hutchinson professeth that if he come not to New she must to Old England."

XXVII

IN a tract, "A Glass for the People of New England," probably by Samuel Gorton, it is related that "they (Anne Hutchinson and her friends) made a cave or caves and in them lived until the cold winter was past, in which time it was known to the professors (the elders of the Boston Church) where they were and that they had bought the island of the Indians." Sometimes the early settlers were compelled to take to caves while building their houses. But whether the Hutchinsons actually did so or not, the tract is interesting as a testimony of the sufferings Rhode Island tradition ascribed to the banished Opinionists of the Massachusetts Bay.

Anne Hutchinson's sojourn in "Read-Iland, (surnamed by some the Iland of Errors)," ¹ was marked by political strife and contention. Indeed, her career in Aquiday reopens the question of her ambition. Was she political in her aspirations? Or was she mystic—"a true saint of God," as her husband said?

¹ *A Short Story.*

On the seventh of March, 1638, William Coddington was "chosen by the Freemen Incorporated of this bodie Politick to be a Judge amongst them." It was a misfortune for Anne that her own church trial prevented her from exerting her great influence to secure the selection of her husband, William. Only two of the company proposing to depart, Anne Hutchinson and William Aspinwall, had actually been banished by the Great and General Court of Massachusetts. Most of them were leaving because of Governor Winthrop's new terrorism. They showed their independent spirit and contempt for Massachusetts by introducing many innovations in their new colony. They adopted, among other things, a new calendar of their own.

After concluding the purchase of "Aqued-neck" from "Canounicus and Miantunnomu, the two chiefe Sachims of the Nanhiggansets," a committee went out in search of a place to settle.¹ Upon the Committee's return, the settlers set forth from Providence, where they had

¹ R. I. Colonial Records, cited in H. M. Chapin's *Documentary History of R. I.*

gathered until the report of the investigators should be made.

But soon the whole drama was staged again. Religious difficulties sprang up between William Coddington and Anne. Perhaps the ageing, now seventy-six-year-old Judge was too autocratic. In any case, Anne's party sought more political power. Perhaps they did so to safeguard their religious views. Is it not more likely that Anne was dreaming of playing the amenable William in the role of the departed Vane?

XXVIII

ANNE HUTCHINSON and Samuel Gorton, who had recently been dismissed from Plymouth, temporarily united their forces to oust Coddington from his office. As a result Coddington consented to the creation of a board of three elders, and then proceeded to fill the posts with three of his staunch adherents. Anne found, to her dismay, that the chain strengthened, rather than weakened her adversary. Then it was that she first began to speak of "having no magistracy" — since she could not have that one which she wanted.

During William Coddington's absence in Massachusetts, a coup d'état was cleverly planned by the Hutchinsonians. At a town meeting on April 28, 1639, they insistently demanded an election. Such a hubbub arose as takes the reader back to the scene on the Newtowne Common in May, 1637, when Pastor Wilson climbed a tree. Then, as now, the governorship was at stake. But this time Anne triumphed. William was chosen Governor in Coddington's place. Immediately Coddington

and his friends withdrew twelve miles down the island, where they founded the town of Newport.

As soon as Coddington and his followers were well established at Newport, he strove to unite all of the towns on the island under one government. Since he held the original deed from the Indians in his own name, he controlled all the land titles. This was a potent factor in compelling the other towns to capitulate and submit to the Newport government. It must also have influenced Anne to exert her last political persuasion — to induce her husband to lay down his political office.

Robert Baylie in "A Disuasive from the Errours of the Time" says, "Mr. Williams related to me that Mistress Hutchinson (with whom he was familiarly acquainted, and of whome he spake much good) after she had come to Rid Island, and her husband had beene made Governour there, she persuaded him to lay downe his office upon the opinion which she newly had taken up of the unlawfulness of his magistracy."

Had she found that the game was up? She

had met again a situation which she was powerless to combat, but this time she made her surrender seem like a voluntary choice. For Anne was ever a woman of haughty carriage and nimble wit, as her persecutors said.

By persuading her husband to lay down his office, she removed the chief obstacle to the Union. Gorton still opposed the plan, but as his faction was minute, no attention was paid to him. As a compromise to the amalgamation, Coddington offered annual elections — one of the chief bones of contention. And William Hutchinson, in return for the service he had rendered the Coddington faction by laying down his office, was elected one of the assistants. Probably it was not difficult to persuade him to rest. To a man of his temperament the succession of crises must have been very exhausting. William Hutchinson was no longer a young man, and about this time his health began to decline.

XXIX

EVEN now the Boston elders would not leave Anne in peace. In the early spring of 1640 a delegation from the Boston Church arrived in Aquidneck, to make one more attempt to reclaim Mistress Hutchinson and her followers. According to the report subsequently made by this delegation to John Cotton and other members of the Boston Church, the Rhode Islanders did not put themselves to much inconvenience to receive them. "And so were we fain to take all their answers by going to their several houses. Mr. Hutchinson told us he was more nearly tied to his wife than to the church; he thought her to be a dear saint and servant of God. We came then to Mrs. Hutchinson, and told her that we had a message to do to her from the Lord, and from our church. She answered, 'There are lords many and gods many, but I acknowledge but one Lord. Which Lord do you mean?' We answered, 'We came in the name of but one Lord, and that is God.' 'Then,' said she, 'so far we agree, and where we doe agree let it be set down.' Then we told her,

‘We had a message to her from the church of Christ in Boston.’ She replied, ‘She knew no church but one.’ We told her, ‘In Scripture, the Holy Ghost calls them churches.’ She said, ‘Christ had but one spouse.’ We told her, ‘He had in some sort as many spouses as saints.’ But for our church, she would not acknowledge it any church of Christ.”

When this delegation was making its report, the mere echo of Anne’s voice seems to have caused a cold shiver to creep along the spine of John Cotton, for at this point he interrupted them to say, “Time being far spent it will not be seasonable to speak much”; and then he continued to hold forth himself for quite a long time.¹

¹ See quarto Ms., belonging to Mass. Hist. Soc., containing penmanship of Captain Robert Keayne.

XXX

IN 1642 William Hutchinson, the fond and loyal husband, died. As there was some talk at the time of amalgamating Massachusetts and Rhode Island, his wife and family immediately removed to a point on Manhattan, "Hell Gate." Perhaps the mere suspicion of coming once more under the dreaded authority of the elders was sufficient to make Anne Hutchinson take to flight. More likely that her ever restless spirit craved new lands to conquer, now that she had met with a second defeat in Rhode Island. Her enemies, whose venom seems to have increased rather than to have subsided with the passage of time, said that she left because even those godless Rhode Islanders could not endure her society.

When, the next year, she and all her family which were with her, being sixteen persons, were killed by the Indians, except one daughter whom they carried into captivity, her enemies seemed to howl their triumph to the skies. For she, who had prophesied their downfall had herself fallen.

As it was not unusual for the Indians to compel women captives to travel twenty miles on foot, across marshes and through streams, in a single day, with no shelter but the heavens, nor couch but the bare ground, perhaps Anne Hutchinson had the better part to perish as she did. Let us hope that the Indians, on this occasion, did not follow their usual custom of tying up the parents to witness the slaughter of their children; and that she was spared the knowledge that her youngest child was dragged away into the wilderness to perish or be brought up in ignorance by a squaw. It may be that the savages, exasperated by her bold spirit — even as the elders had been — slaughtered her at once, thereby sparing her the supreme agony that a mother may endure. History thoughtfully draws the curtain, leaving her at bay, again, but now for the last time, badgered by a circle of angry men.

APPENDIX

APPENDIX I

An extract from *The First Americans*, by Thomas Jefferson Wertenbaker:

“The home life of the average New England rural family was wholesome, practical, arduous. With the first streaks of gray in the east the father was out of bed, to strike a light with flint and steel and kindle a fire in the huge stone fireplace. As the others arose, they took their turns at the wooden basin, perhaps to break the icy surface before washing their faces and hands. The father and older sons then went to the cow yard to milk the cows, while the younger boys fed the hogs. In the meantime, the mother and daughters had been cooking the porridge, and when the reading of the Scriptures and the family prayers had been concluded, breakfast was ready. The family gathered around the long, narrow table board, perhaps by the light of candles, and reverently gave thanks. After the porridge had been dealt out in small wooden bowls, all sat down to enjoy this early repast.

“The father and sons then went forth to the fields for the day’s work. If it was spring or early summer, they armed themselves with hoes and brought out the wooden plow, drawn by slow-moving oxen; if late summer or autumn, they carried scythes and two-pronged pitchforks. While they labored, breaking the soil or mowing wheat or stacking corn stalks, the women of the family were busy at home. One cleared the table and washed

the dishes, one labored at the cheese press, one busied herself at the washtub, another at the soap kettle, another prepared the midday meal. The cooking was done over the log fire in the huge fireplace. Here the skillful cook boiled her Indian corn and kidney beans, flavored with a slice of salt venison; here she made her pumpkin pie, slicing the ripe fruit, boiling it in a little water, and adding butter, vinegar and spice.

"At noon the table board was set for dinner — the high saltcellar at the center, then clumsy wooden trenchers, round pewter platters heaped with delicious succotash, a great wooden noggin, several wooden tankards, a number of pewter spoons, but no forks, no glassware, no china, no covered dishes, no saucers. At the summons of the horn the workers hurried in from the fields, and the family seated themselves on long, narrow benches on each side of the table to help themselves to the plain but bountiful food.

"The midday meal over, the father and the boys returned to the fields for five more hours of labor, while the mother and daughters resumed their separate tasks. As evening approached the hogs and sheep were driven into their enclosures near the barn, where the faithful dog could guard them throughout the night. Supper was simple — for the children, milk porridge or hasty pudding; for the father and mother a slice of cold pork, brown bread and a mug of beer. Once more the Scriptures were read, while the family sat with bowed heads. By eight o'clock all were in bed."

APPENDIX II

An extract from Governor Winthrop's Journal regarding the prevalent belief in omens and portents:

"This puts me in mind of another child very strangely drowned a little before winter. The parents were also members of the church of Boston. The father had undertaken to maintain the mill-dam, and being at work upon it (with some help he had hired), in the afternoon of the last day of the week, night came upon them before they had finished what they intended, and his conscience began to put him in mind of the Lord's day, and he was troubled, yet went on and wrought an hour within night. The next day, after evening exercise, and after they had supped, the mother put two children to bed in the room where themselves did lie, and they went out to visit a neighbor. When they returned, they continued about an hour in the room, and missed not the child, but then the mother going to the bed, and not finding her youngest child (a daughter of about five years of age), after much search she found it drowned in a well in her cellar; which was very observable, as by a special hand of God, that the child should go out of that room into another in the dark, and then fall down at a trap-door, or go down the stairs, and so into the well in the farther end of the cellar, the top of the well and the water being even with the ground. But the father, freely in the open congregation, did acknowledge it the righteous hand of God for his profaning his holy day."

APPENDIX III

INDIAN ATTACKS

From an early pamphlet, *A Memorial of the Present Deplorable State of N. E.* inserted in Sewall's Diary:

"The Indians came upon the House of one Adams at Wells, and captivated the Man and his Wife, and assassinated the children. . . . The woman had lain in about 8 days. They drag'd her out, and tied her to a Post until the House was rifled. They then loosed her, and bid her walk. She could not stir. By the help of a Stick she got half a step forward. She look'd up to God. On the sudden a new strength entered into her. She travelled that very Day Twenty Miles a Foot; She was up to the Neck In Water five times that very Day in passing of Rivers. At night she fell over head and ears, in a Slough in a Swamp, and hardly got out alive. . . . She is come home alive unto us."

From the account of Mary Rowlandson's Captivity written by herself, tells of the attack by the Indians, the massacre of her relations, and the capture of herself and her babe: "There remained nothing to me but one poor, wounded babe, and it seemed at present worse than death, that it was in such a pitiful condition, bespeaking compassion, and I had no refreshing for it, nor suitable things to revive it.

. . . But now (the next morning) I must turn my back upon the town, and travel with them into the vast and

desolate wilderness, I knew not whither. It is not my tongue or pen can express the sorrows of my heart, and bitterness of my spirit, that I had at this departure; but God was with me in a wonderful manner, carrying me along and bearing up my spirit that it did not quite fail. One of the Indians carried my poor wounded babe upon a horse, it went moaning all along: 'I shall die, I shall die.' I went on foot after it, with sorrow that cannot be expressed. At length I took it off the horse and carried it in my arms, till my strength failed and I fell down with it. Then they set me upon a horse with my wounded child in my lap, and there being no furniture on the horse's back, as we were going down a steep hill we both fell over the horse's head, at which they like inhuman creatures, laughed and rejoiced to see it, though I thought we should there have ended our days, overcome with so many difficulties."

. . . She tells of the continuation of her sufferings, and her final release, and the return of her daughter — "She was travelling one day with the Indians, with her basket on her back; the company of Indians were got before her and gone out of sight, all except one squaw. She followed the squaw till night, and then both of them lay down, having nothing over them but the heavens, nor under them but the earth. Thus she traveled three days together, having nothing to eat or drink but water and green whortleberries."

APPENDIX IV

The Twenty-Nine Errours held by Mistress Hutchinson, as cited in *A Short Story*:

“1. That the soules of all men (in regard of generation) are mortall like the beasts, Eccl. 3. 8.

“2. That in regard of Christs purchase they are immortall, so that Christ hath purchased the soules of the wicked to eternall paine, and the soules of the elect to eternall peace.

“3. Those who are united to Christ have in this life new bodies, and 2 bodies, 1 Cor. 6.19. she knowes not how Jesus Christ should be united to this our fleshly bodies.

“4. Those who have union with Christ, shall not rise with the same fleshly bodies, 1 Cor. 15. 44.

“5. And that the resurrection mentioned there, and in John 5. 28. is not meant of the resurrection of the body, but of our union here and after this life.

“6. That there are no created graces in the Saints after their union with Christ, but before there are, for Christ takes them out of their hands into his owne.

“7. There are no created graces in the humane nature of Christ, but he was onely acted by the power of the God-head.

“8. The Image of God wherein Adam was made, she could see no Scripture to warrant that it consisted in holinesse, but conceived it to be in that he was made like to Christs manhood.

"9. She had no Scripture to warrant that Christs manhood is now in Heaven, but the body of Christ is his Church.

"10. We are united to Christ with the same union, that his humanity on earth was with the Deity, Jo. 17. 21.

"11. She conceived the Disciples before Christ his death were not converted, Matth. 18. 3.

"12. There is no evidence to be had of our good estate, either from absolute or conditionall promises.

"13. The Law is no rule of life to a Christian.

"14. There is no Kingdome of Heaven in Scripture but onely Christ.

"15. There is first engrassing into Christ before union, from which a man might fall away.

"16. The first thing God reveales to assure us is our election.

"17. That Abraham was not in a saving estate till the 22 Chap. of Gen. when hee offered Isaac, and saving the firmenesse of Gods election, he might have perished notwithstanding any work of grace that was wrought in him till then.

"18. That union to Christ is not by faith.

"19. That all commands in the word are Law, and are not a way of life, and the command of faith is a Law, and therefore killeth; she supposed it to be a Law from Rom. 3. 27.

"20. That there is not faith of Gods elect but assurance, there is no faith of dependance but such as an hypocrite may have and fall away from, proved John 15.

for by that she said they are in Christ, but Christ is not in them.

“21. That an hypocrite may have Adams righteousness and perish, and by that righteousness he is bound to the Law, but in union with Christ, Christ comes into the man, and he retaines the feed, and dieth, and then all manner of grace in himselfe, but all in Christ.

“22. There is no such thing as inherent righteousness.

“23. We are not bound to the Law. . . as a rule of life.

“24. We are dead to all acts in spirituall things, and are onely acted by Christ.

“25. Not being bound to the Law, it is not transgression against the Law to sinne, or breake it, because our sinnes they are inward and spirituall, and so are exceeding sinfull, and onely are against Christ.

“26. Sanctification can be no evidence at all of our good estate.

“27. That her particular revelations about future events are as infallible as any part of Scripture, and that she is bound as much to beleieve them, as the Scripture, for the same holy Ghost is the author of them both.

“28. That so farre as man is in union with Christ, he can doe no duties perfectly, and without the communion of the unregenerate part with the regenerate.

“29. That such exhortations as these, to worke out our salvation with feare, to make our calling and election sure, &c. are spoken only to such, as are under a Covenant of workes.”

APPENDIX V

An extract from Governor Winthrop's Journal, Volume I, page 263, regarding the miscarriages of Mistress Anne Hutchinson, and Mary Dyer:

"Mrs. Hutchinson, being removed to the Isle of Aquiday, in Narragansett Bay, after her time was fulfilled, that she expected deliverance of a child, was delivered of a monstrous birth, which, being diversly related in the country, (and, in the open assembly at Boston, upon a lecture day, declared by Mr. Cotton to be twenty-seven several lumps of man's seed, without any alteration, or mixture of anything from the woman, and thereupon gathered, that it might signify her error in denying inherent righteousness, but that all was Christ in us, and nothing of ours in our faith, love, etc.) hereupon the governor wrote to Mr. Clarke, a physician and a preacher to those of the island, to know the certainty thereof, who returned him this answer: Mrs. Hutchinson, six weeks before her delivery, perceived her body to be greatly disordered, and her spirits failing and in that regard doubtful of life, she sent to me, etc., and not long after (in immoderate fluore uterino) it was brought to light, and I was called to see it, where I beheld, first unwashed, (and afterwards in warm water,) several lumps, every one of them greatly confused, and if you consider each of them according to the representation of the whole, they were altogether without form; but if they were considered in respect of the parts of each lump of

flesh, then there was a representation of innumerable distinct bodies in the form of a globe, not much unlike the swims of some fish, so confusedly knit together by so many several strings, (which I conceive were the beginnings of veins and nerves,) so that it was impossible either to number the small round pieces in every lump, much less to discern from whence every string did fetch its original, they were so snarled one within another. The small globes I likewise opened, and perceived the matter of them (setting aside the membrane in which it was involved,) to be partly wind and partly water. Of these several lumps there were about twenty-six, according to the relation of those, who more narrowly searched into the number of them. I took notice of six or seven of some bigness; the rest were small; but all as I have declared, except one or two, which differed much from the rest, both in matter and form; and the whole was like the of the liver, being simular and everywhere like itself. When I had opened it, the matter seemed to be blood congealed. The governour, not satisfied with this relation, spake after with the said Mr. Clarke, who thus cleared all the doubts: The lumps were twenty-six or twenty-seven distinct and not joined together; there came no secundine after them; six of them were as great as his fist, and one as great as two fists, the rest each less than the other, and the smallest about the bigness of the top of his thumb. The globes were round things, included in the lumps, about the bigness of a small Indian bean and like the pearl in a man's eye. The

two lumps, which differed from the rest, were like liver or congealed blood, and had no small globes in them, as the rest had. Mr. Cotton, next lecture day, acknowledged his error, etc., and that he had his information by a letter from her husband, etc.”

Page 270, Vol. I, John Winthrop:

“The wife of one William Dyer, a milliner in the New Exchange, a very proper and fair woman, and both of them notoriously infected with Mrs. Hutchinson’s errors, and very censorious and troublesome, (she being of a very proud spirit, and much addicted to revelations,) had been delivered of a child some few months before, October 17, and the child buried, (being still-born,) and viewed of none but Mrs. Hutchinson and the midwife, one Hawkin’s wife, a rank familist also; and another woman had a glimpse of it, who, not being able to keep counsel, as the other two did, some rumour began to spread, that the child was a monster. One of the elders, hearing of it, asked Mrs. Hutchinson, when she was ready to depart; whereupon she told him how it was, and said she meant to have it chronicled, but excused her concealing of it till then, (by advice, as she said, of Mr. Cotton,) which coming to the governour’s knowledge, he called another of the magistrates and that elder, and sent for the midwife, and examined her about it. At first she confessed only, that the head was defective and misplaced, but being told that Mrs. Hutchinson had revealed all, and that he intended to have it taken up and viewed, she made this report of it, viz. It was a

woman child, stillborn, about two months before the just time, having life a few hours before; it came hiplings till she turned it; it was of ordinary bigness; it had a face, but no head, and the ears stood upon the shoulders and were like an ape's; it had no forehead, but over the eyes four horns, hard and sharp; two of them were above one inch long, the other two shorter; the eyes standing out, and the mouth also; the nose hooked upward; all over the breast and back full of sharp pricks and scales, like a thornback; the navel and all the belly, with the distinction of the sex, were where the back should be, and the back and hips before, where the belly should have been; behind, between the shoulders, it had two mouths, and in each of them a piece of red flesh sticking out; it had arms and legs as other children; but instead of toes, it had on each foot three claws, like a young fowl with sharp talons.

“The governour speaking with Mr. Cotton about it, he told him the reason why he advised them to conceal it: 1. Because he saw a providence of God in it, that the rest of the women, which were coming and going in the time of her travail, should then be absent. 2. He considered, that, if it had been his own case, he should have desired to have had it concealed. 3. He had known other monstrous births, which had been concealed, and that he thought God might intend only the instruction of the parents, and such other to whom it was known, etc. The like apology he made for himself in public, which was well accepted.

“The governor, with advice of some other of the magistrates and of the elders of Boston, caused the said monster to be taken up, and though it were much corrupted, yet most of those things were to be seen, as the horns and claws, the scales, etc. When it died in the mother’s body (which was about two hours before the birth), the bed whereon the mother lay did shake, and withal there was such a noisome savour, as most of the women were taken with extreme vomiting and purging, so as they were forced to depart; and others of them their children were taken with convulsions (which they never had before nor after), and so were sent for home, so as by these occasions it came to be concealed.

“Another thing observable was the discovery of it, which was just when Mrs. Hutchinson was cast out of the church. For Mrs. Dyer going forth with her, a stranger asked, what young woman it was. The others answered, it was the woman which had the monster; which gave the first occasion to some that heard it to speak of it. The midwife, presently after this discovery, went out of the jurisdiction; and indeed it was time for her to be gone, for it was known that she used to give young women oil of mandrakes and other stuff to cause conception; and she grew into great suspicion to be a witch, for it was credibly reported, that, when she gave any medicines (for she practised physick), she would aske the party, if she did believe, she could help her, etc.

“Another observable passage was, that the father of this monster, coming home at this very time, was, the

next Lord's day, by an unexpected providence, questioned in the church for divers monstrous errours, as for denying all inherent righteousness, etc., which he maintained, and was for the same admonished."

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